

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please replace the claims with the claims provided in the listing below wherein status, amendments, additions and cancellations are indicated.

1. (Currently amended) A method of producing a starch mixture of grainy to powdery materials containing starch, comprising:

mixing ~~a first component containing at least one starch~~ flour as a first component with a second component containing at least water in an extruder to form a mixture, a total water content of the mixture containing the ~~first component~~ flour and the second component being less than 40% by weight;

cooking the mixture in the extruder, said cooking including maintaining a temperature between 120° and 250°C ~~and introducing a specific mechanical energy into the mixture of about 120 to 220 Wh/kg during the mixing;~~

air drying an extrudate emerging from the extruder; and

grinding and screening the extrudate following said air drying.

2. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein a maximum screen size which is used during screening is about 4 mm.

3. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 1, further comprising adding water to the extruder during the mixing process, an initial water

content of the ~~first component~~ flour prior to said adding being about 10 to 15% by weight.

4. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising adding acid to the mixture containing starch and water during the mixing.

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the ~~component,~~
~~containing the starch~~ flour[[,]] is conventional[[,]] commercial rye flour with an initial water content of about 10 to 15% by weight.

7. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the mixing and cooking takes place in a twin-screw extruder, rotating in the same direction at 200 to 1200 rpm.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Withdrawn) The starch-containing, grainy to powdery mixture of materials, produced by the method of claim 1.

10. (Previously presented) A method for producing a binder comprising stirring the starch-containing mixture of materials produced in accordance with the method of claim 1 into water.

11. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 10, wherein the starch-containing mixture of materials is stirred into water having a temperature of 20° to 70°C.

12. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 10, wherein the starch-containing mixture of materials is used as a binder for cellulose fibers.

13. (Currently amended) The method ~~[[of]]~~ according to claim 1, wherein the total water content of the mixture, containing the ~~first component~~ flour and the second component, ranges from 15% to 20%.

14. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the temperature during the mixing and cooking in the extruder ranges from approximately 160° to 220°C.

15. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the maximum screen size during screening ranges from about 1 mm to 3mm.

16. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising adding alkali during the mixing to the mixture containing starch and water.

17. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising adding acid and alkali during the mixing to the mixture containing starch and water.

18. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the component, containing the starch, is rye flour.

19. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 10, wherein the starch-containing mixture of materials is stirred into water having a temperature of 30° to 60°C.

20. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 10, wherein the starch-containing mixture of materials is used as a binder for producing paper or cardboard.

21. (Withdrawn) A binder comprising the starch-containing, grainy to powdery mixture of materials produced by the method of claim 1, and water with which said starch-containing, grainy to powdery mixture of materials has been stirred.

22. (Withdrawn) A binder for cellulose fibers comprising the starch-containing, grainy to powdery mixture of materials produced by the method of claim 1, and water with which said starch containing, grainy to powdery mixture of materials has been stirred.

23. (Cancelled)